

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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## **MEMORANDUM**

DATE: JANUARY 5, 2011

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: ABI LERNER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #7 - COMPLETE STREETS RESOLUTION FOR  
CONSIDERATION BY THE CITY COUNCIL

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This memorandum provides an update to Commissioners on the status of the Commission recommendation to City Council regarding a Complete Streets Policy. At its meeting on July 7, the Commission voted to recommend that the City Council adopt the Complete Streets resolution and ordinance that were prepared by the sub-committee established by the Commission.

While staff strongly supports the adoption of a Complete Streets resolution (Attachment 1) to support the City's guiding policies and to create a more multi-modal transportation network Citywide, staff does not support the adoption of a formal ordinance due to the potential for added time to planning and implementation, fiscal constraints and limited staff resources.

In a comparison of 23 other jurisdictions with Complete Streets policies (Attachment 2), only eight have enacted legislation or language in their ordinance reflecting the policy. All the other jurisdictions have policies, plans or best practices to implement the Complete Streets policy. Many of Alexandria's neighboring jurisdictions have adopted Complete Streets policies including Arlington County, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Montgomery County, MD and Rockville MD.

In some cases, the adoption of the ordinance results in street designs that include features that are desirable but not necessary or feasible. The addition of multi-modal facilities may complicate the design of these projects, may require additional right-of-way and may result in significant increases in the cost of the street improvements. The proposed ordinance would limit the City's ability to streamline the review process, add cost and time to many projects and would limit the flexibility to implement street enhancements that are commensurate with the benefits gained from the improvements.

As a result, staff supports the adoption of a Complete Streets resolution and the development of a Complete Streets Checklist to ensure that a Complete Streets review is conducted for all new development projects and City roadway projects, and Complete Streets infrastructure is constructed to the extent feasible. The Complete Streets

Checklist would ensure accommodation of bicyclists, pedestrians, transit vehicles, persons with disabilities and vehicles as appropriate and feasible. A sample checklist shows what this might look like (Attachment 3).

Before making its recommendation, staff received and considered comments from the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Department of Planning & Zoning, Office of Environmental Quality and BikeWalk Alexandria.

The proposed resolution and ordinance recommended by the Transportation Commission called for the development and maintenance of a Street Design Manual. The development of a comprehensive design manual, described in the resolution, which would provide design guidance to city agencies, design professionals, private developers and community groups for the improvement and maintenance of streets and sidewalks, will require staff resources not currently available.

The revised Complete Streets resolution will be brought to the City Council for consideration.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Complete Streets Resolution
2. Comparison Table of Jurisdictions
3. Sample Complete Streets Checklist